

Fredericksburg Arts Commission Meeting

**Thursday, June 4th, 2009
City Hall Conference Room**

Attendees: Roy Jarnecke, Julie Perry, Kathleen Walsh, Peter Scelfo, Kevin Bartram, Debby Klein, and Rochelle Grey.

Approval of Minutes

Roy Jarnecke called the meeting to order. Approval of the minutes from the March 5th meeting was moved by Debbie Klein and seconded by Kevin Bartram. The minutes passed unanimously with one spelling correction under the VALAA Spring Conference presentation.

The minutes from the May 7th meeting were moved for approval by Peter Scelfo and seconded by Kathleen Walsh. They passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There were two members of the public in attendance - Sharon Smith a multi-cultural arts educator and administrator and Kathryn Willis from the Arts and Cultural Council of the Rappahannock.

Kathryn Willis gave a brief presentation to the Commission about the VALAA Conference hosted in Fredericksburg on Friday, May 15th, 2009. The event is considered a resounding success and VALAA, VCA and Virginian's for the Arts are looking at a follow-up conference possibly in October of this year. She informed the group that she could provide a disk and notebook of materials covered at the conference for those who would like them and were unable to attend.

Kathryn Willis also presented some information about the Arts and Cultural Council of the Rappahannock's recent grant award from PNC Bank. The award is to foster sustainability in Arts organizations from a regional perspective. She informed the commission that along with the grant PNC is interested in working on a regional solution to a performing arts center.

Kathryn also suggested in a proposal to Roy Jarnecke that we formalize communication between the Arts and Cultural Council of the Rappahannock and the Fredericksburg Arts Commission. Some discussion followed. Peter Scelfo asked Kathryn Willis to elaborate on her Council's mission and how she sees it relating to the Fredericksburg Arts Commission. Kathryn Willis briefly informed the group of a slide show currently on her website at www.rapp-arts.org that might answer some of those questions and concerns. Debby Klein then clarified that the Arts and Cultural Council of the Rappahannock is a public, non-governmental body.

Committee Reports

Arts Festival Committee – Kevin Bartram

Kevin Bartram handed out a motion from the Arts Festival Committee in memo form. The proposal called for a formal hiring of Sue Henderson to coordinate a 2010 festival on behalf of the Fredericksburg Arts Commission. The proposal did not outline the nature of the festival rather more the nature of the client relationship with Sue Henderson, event planner and a proposed festival timeline. Much discussion followed.

Peter Scelfo spoke about the relationship of the Strategic Plan and the Arts Festival concepts both overlapping and opposing each other. He suggested the festival should be put on hold until the commission better defined itself and its role in the community through the strategic planning process. He presented the concept of a Saturday in the Park style program from the Strategic Plan Committee that would build upon the Saturday Farmer's Market to move it in a more artistic direction. Debby Klein said she felt both concepts could co-exist and Rochelle Grey agreed. Roy Jarnecke addressed the benefit of using available resources and Julie Perry explained the Department of Economic Development and Tourism's professional services funds (\$3,000.00) that have been put to the festival project. Roy Jarnecke then expanded upon the importance of accepting that collaboration while we continue to define ourselves and our mission.

Peter then re-addressed the importance of defining who "WE, the Fredericksburg, Arts Commission" is through planning before getting in too-deep with individual projects that may not support the mission or direction of the organization. Kathleen Walsh also expressed concern about the Arts Commission being an advisory board with most of its members busy with individual arts work. Her concern was not taking on more than we can handle in reference to staffing, volunteers, and personnel time. Debby Klein then responded that she felt the definition of our Commission would continue to evolve as a product of action.

After much additional discussion Kevin Bartram called for the question. The motion carried with a vote of 6 to 1.

Website and Cultural Survey Committee Report- Carolyn Van Der Jagt/PatThalman

Pat Thalman and Carolyn Van Der Jagt were not present at the meeting. Roy Jarnecke went over Carolyn Van Der Jagt's email of May 31st with more survey responses and directed everyone to Bill Richardson's comments. Debby Klein said she appreciated Mr. Richardson's responses and felt they were indicative of the community at large.

It was also brought up that the FCCA has the wrong date in their newsletter for survey completion.

Next Kathleen Walsh discussed her concerns of putting so much work on Carolyn Van Der Jagt given the scope of this project and the ongoing nature of the concept. Debbie Klein and Roy Jarnecke agreed and said the committee should examine Carolyn Van Der Jagt's willingness and available time as the project progresses and report to the commission any concerns or additional needs.

Long Term Planning Committee – Peter Scelfo

Peter Scelfo asked the Commission members to provide comments on growth and expansion of the local arts community from the varied perspectives of individual members and their representative organizations. He explained the need for collaborative effort to write certain sections of the document and went on to ask Debby Klein to write a section with background information that led to the formation of the current Fredericksburg Arts Commission. He also asked for comments on "what's happening now" within various artistic disciplines. Some clarification discussions followed.

Peter Scelfo also informed the Commission that the Strategic Planning committee intends to present the summary portion of the document at the next meeting so that comments can be solicited and incorporated before the fall presentation of the entire work.

Old Business

Arts District Conference – Roy Jarnecke

Roy Jarnecke went through this agenda item quickly as it was mostly covered by Kathryn Willis in her earlier presentation.

Not on the Agenda – Debbie Klein

Debby Klein updated the Commission on an assignment from a previous meeting to discuss with the library graphics design team about the possibility of designing a logo for the Arts Commission. She got a positive response from Maggie Bice. Debby Klein also gathered information about the Library's new Arts website at www.librarypoint.org/arts. Local artist Samantha Thomason will be maintaining the site and is interested in working with and supporting the Fredericksburg Arts Commission any way she can. Julie Perry re-iterated that Nancy Buck and the library staff have committed to working with the Commission on incorporating their thoughts and ideas in the arts webpages. Rochelle Grey also commented on the many positive outcomes of this kind of collaboration and the importance of working with outside groups and organizations.

New Business

Arts and Cultural District – Kevin Bartram

Kevin Bartram addressed the group about the possibility of Fredericksburg creating an Arts and Cultural District. The General Assembly has passed legislation that will allow cities to form these districts as of July 1st 2009. He informed the Commission that Richmond has approved their district and it will be in effect as of July 1st. Kevin Bartram made a motion for the commission to explore this idea on behalf of the City of Fredericksburg. Rochelle Grey 2nd the motion.

Much discussion followed. Julie Perry informed the commission members that City Staff and City Council members have already scheduled a meeting to begin the work on this initiative. She said she felt the Arts Commission would play a role in that effort but that until City Staff met she could not comfortably assess things one way or the other. Peter Scelfo also expressed concern that we may be putting the cart before the horse without any council members to lead the way and without a strategic plan in place to govern the Commission's actions. Roy Jarnecke said he would normally have appointed a committee after such a vote but that if the commission passed Kevin Bartram's motion he would wait until he had a report from City Staff. Rochelle called for the question. It passed with a vote of 5 in favor and 2 abstaining.

Fredericksburg City Art Inventory – Julie Perry for George Solley

Julie Perry presented the idea of the Arts Commission taking on the task of inventorying City-owned Art. Roy Jarnecke addressed that this was what some experts in Roanoke said was the first thing they did when beginning a Public Art Program and that it would create a valuable list for a variety of purposes. Julie Perry expressed that she thought City Department Heads could be responsible for inventory within their own departments, but that the Arts Commission would need to clearly define the inventory boundaries (ie what and how to inventory) and purposes. Debby Klein and Peter Scelfo both questioned whether this was truly a commission role or whether it was more of a city staff responsibility. It was then suggested that a UMW intern could be valuable in a role like this. Kevin Bartram and Julie Perry said they would research this possibility and report back to the commission.

Not on the Agenda - Calendar Issues – Peter Scelfo

Peter Scelfo brought up an idea for collaborating on a calendar with the Free Lance Star. He said that instead of perpetuating the idea that artists are not organized and they need to create something new to coordinate their efforts that we should really reach out to the organization with the most successful and widely used calendar - the Free Lance Star. The Commission as a whole liked this idea and Julie Perry volunteered to connect Peter Scelfo with the editor of the weekender Dave Smalley to explore possibilities.

Next Meeting

Chairman Jarnecke informed the commission that the July meeting will have officer elections. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 3rd at 7pm in the City Hall Conference Room.

Adjournment

Julie Perry made a motion that the meeting be adjourned and Kevin Bartram seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.